

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3, 5-8, and 16 are amended herein. Claims 10-15 and 17-20 are cancelled without prejudice. Re-examination and reconsideration of the application, as amended and in view of the following remarks, are requested.

Claim 1 was believed to be patentable in reciting a watercraft apparatus that includes among other features “a jet pump operatively coupled to the at least one camshaft to be driven at the reduced speed of the camshaft, the jet pump supported for providing the drive power to drive the hull on water.” However, to expedite the prosecution of the patent application, claim 1 is amended to include “a coupling structure operatively coupling the jet pump to the at least one camshaft to drive the jet pump at the reduced speed of the camshaft, the jet pump supported for providing drive power to drive the hull on water.” None of the references cited in the Office Action dated December 14, 2004, individually or in combination, describe or suggest “a coupling structure operatively coupling the jet pump to the at least one camshaft to drive the jet pump at the reduced speed of the camshaft, the jet pump supported for providing drive power to drive the hull on water.”

In the Office Action dated December 14, 2004, claims 1, 2, and 4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Parker in view of Uchida. Claim 3 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Parker in view of Uchida, and further in view of Simner. Claim 9 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Parker in view of Uchida, and further in view of Buzzi.

Each of the above rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) is respectfully traversed, in view of the claims as amended herein. As amended, the rejected claims recite features not disclosed or suggested in Parker, Uchida, Simner, or Buzzi, individually or in combination.

In particular, claim 1 recites a watercraft apparatus that includes among other features “a coupling structure operatively coupling the jet pump to the at least one camshaft to drive the jet pump at the reduced speed of the camshaft, the jet pump supported for providing drive power to drive the hull on water.” Because the camshaft typically operates at a reduced speed compared to the crankshaft, such a coupling structure allows the jet pump to be driven by the camshaft at a

reduced speed, while still maintaining the engine at a higher and more efficient speed, as discussed in paragraph 0006 of the specification. Furthermore, while typical outboard and stern drive systems use relatively expensive bevel gears between the crankshaft and the jet pump propellers for speed reduction at the jet pump propeller, a coupling structure between the jet pump and the camshaft eliminates the need for such bevel gears while still achieving the same goal. (See paragraph 0006 of the specification.)

Parker teaches a boat with a removable inboard jet propulsion unit, but does not describe or suggest a mechanism what couples the jet pump to the camshaft of the engine.

Uchida teaches a mechanism by which the camshaft of the engine is driven by the crankshaft at reduced speeds, but does not describe or suggest connecting a transmission or any other propulsion system to the camshaft. Uchida describes the function of the camshaft as “employed for operating the valve train”, and does not describe or suggest using the camshaft for any other purpose. (See Uchida, col. 1, ll. 26-28.) Furthermore, Uchida describes “an integrally attached camshaft drive cover” and “a detachable camshaft drive cover.” (See Uchida, Claims 4, 5, 7, 8, and 11, Figs. 8, 9, and 10, Col. 5, ll. 9-10, and 26-31.) A conventional camshaft cover would normally preclude the existence of a coupling structure between the camshaft and outside devices such as a jet pump, hence it is clear that Uchida did not anticipate or suggest coupling the camshaft to anything outside the engine. Moreover, the invention in Uchida relates to engine improvements of motor vehicles. In a typical motor vehicle, the transmission is connected to the crankshaft. The transmission has gears which regulate the speed of the wheels, thus there is no need for a direct coupling to the camshaft for the purpose of speed reduction. Therefore Uchida does not describe or anticipate coupling the camshaft to a jet pump as described in the current application.

Hence, claim 1 is patentably distinguishable from Uchida and Parker under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), individually or in combination. Because claims 2-4, and 9 are dependent claims based on claim 1, those are patentable for at least the reasons above.

Claims 5-7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as

the invention. In particular, the Examiner stated that there was no antecedent basis in the claims for “the suspension system” (claim 5), “the tubing” (claim 6), and “the pressure source” (claim 7). The Examiner further suggested that claims 5-7 should depend on claims 4-6 instead of claims 3-5.

The above rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, is respectfully traversed, in view of the claims as amended herein. In particular, claim 5 is amended to depend from claim 4 and claim 6 is amended to depend from claim 5. In addition, claim 7 is amended to depend from claim 6. These amendments are consistent with the Examiner’s suggestion for overcoming the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. Therefore, as amended, claims 5-7 particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the Applicant regards as his invention, hence they are patentable under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph.

Claims 8 and 16 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. The Examiner stated that they would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The above objection is respectfully traversed, in view of the claims as amended herein.

Claim 8 is amended to become an independent claim which incorporates features in the amended claim 1. Claim 16 is amended to become an independent claim which incorporates features originally in claims 10 and 13. As amended, claims 8 and 16 are independent and include all of the limitations of their original base claims and all intervening claims, hence they are patentable.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance. Applicant believes that the present Response is in compliance with MPEP 714.02 and 608.01(o).

The Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned by telephone at the Los Angeles telephone number (310) 975-7963, if, for any reason, the Examiner believes that the Applicant still has not fully responded to the Office Action.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 50-0872. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 50-0872. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 50-0872.

Respectfully submitted,

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